

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5968

As of February 18, 2009

Title: An act relating to the protection of agricultural lands.

Brief Description: Regarding the protection of agricultural land.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen, Brandland, Hatfield, Morton and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 2/19/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: A provision included in 1990 in the Growth Management Act required state agencies to comply with local comprehensive plans and development regulations adopted by counties. Twenty-nine of the 39 counties in the state have adopted development regulations that include designation and protection of agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance.

Rules adopted by the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development have been adopted to implement this statutory requirement. The rule, WAC 365-195-765, construes the statute to apply only when a building or other permit is required and not to conversion from the designated agricultural use to a nonagricultural use.

Summary of Bill: No state agency may acquire or provide funds to other entities to acquire agricultural lands, designated by a county as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance, without prior written approval by the county legislative authority. The county legislative authority may require the state agency or other entity receiving state funds to submit information including the property's legal description, the proposed use of the property to be acquired, and an analysis of the impact on adjacent lands and the continued viability of the region's agricultural industry.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: None.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.